United Nations A/55/217

General Assembly

Distr.: General
2 August 2000

Original: English

Fifty-fifth session
Item 74 (i) of the provisional agenda*
General and complete disarmament

Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda

Report of the Secretary-General**

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* A/55/150.

** The preparation of this report was dependent on contributions from international organizations and a Government.

00-59041 (E) 300800

I. Introduction

1. On 1 December 1999, the General Assembly adopted resolution 54/54 G, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", paragraphs 1 to 21 of which read as follows:

"*The General Assembly*,

"...

"1. *Calls upon* the nuclear-weapon States to make an unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the speedy and total elimination of their nuclear arsenals and to engage without delay in an accelerated process of negotiations, thus achieving nuclear disarmament, to which they are committed under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

"2. *Calls upon* the United States of America and the Russian Federation to bring the Treaty on Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START II) into force without further delay and to commence negotiations on START III with a view to its early conclusion;

"3. *Calls upon* the nuclear-weapon States to undertake the necessary steps towards the seamless integration of all five nuclear-weapon States into the process leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons;

"4. *Calls* for the examination of ways and means to diminish the role of nuclear weapons in security policies so as to enhance strategic stability, facilitate the process of the elimination of these weapons and contribute to international confidence and security;

"5. *Calls upon* the nuclear-weapon States, in this context, to take early steps:

(a) To reduce tactical nuclear weapons with a view to their elimination as an integral part of nuclear arms reductions;

(b) To examine the possibilities for and to proceed to the de-alerting and removal of nuclear warheads from delivery vehicles;

(c) To examine nuclear weapons policies and postures further;

(d) To demonstrate transparency with regard to their nuclear arsenals and fissile material inventories;

(e) To place all fissile material for nuclear weapons declared to be in excess of military requirements under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards in the framework of the voluntary safeguards agreements in place;

"6. *Calls upon* those three States that are nuclear weapons capable and that have not yet acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to reverse clearly and urgently the pursuit of all nuclear weapons development or deployment and to refrain from any action that could undermine regional and international peace and security and the efforts of the international community towards nuclear disarmament and the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons;

"7. *Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to adhere unconditionally and without delay to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to take all the necessary measures which flow from adherence to that instrument as non-nuclear-weapon States;

"8. *Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to conclude full-scope safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency and to conclude additional protocols to their safeguards agreements on the basis of the Model Protocol approved by the Board of Governors of the Agency on 15 May 1997;

"9. *Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify, unconditionally and without delay, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and, pending the entry into force of the Treaty, to observe a moratorium on nuclear tests;

"10. *Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to adhere to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and to work towards its further strengthening;

"11. *Urges* the development of the Trilateral Initiative between the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency, and urges

that similar arrangements be developed by the other nuclear-weapon States;

"12. *Calls upon* the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee under item 1 of its agenda entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator and the mandate contained therein, of a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, taking into consideration both nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament objectives, and to pursue and conclude these negotiations without delay, and, pending the entry into force of the treaty, urges all States to observe a moratorium on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices;

"13. *Also calls upon* the Conference on Disarmament to establish an appropriate subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament and, to that end, to pursue as a matter of priority its intensive consultations on appropriate methods and approaches with a view to reaching such a decision without delay;

"14. *Considers* that an international conference on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, which would effectively complement efforts being undertaken in other settings, could facilitate the consolidation of a new agenda for a nuclear-weapon-free world;

"15. *Notes*, in this context, that the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000 will consider peace, security and disarmament;

"16. *Stresses* the importance of the full implementation of the decisions and the resolution adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and, in this connection, underlines the significance of the forthcoming Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in April/May 2000;

"17. *Affirms* that the development of verification arrangements will be necessary for the maintenance of a world free from nuclear weapons, and requests the International Atomic Energy Agency, together with any other relevant international organizations and bodies, to continue to explore the elements of such a system;

"18. *Calls* for the conclusion of an internationally legally binding instrument to effectively assure non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;

"19. *Stresses* that the pursuit, extension and establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at, especially in regions of tension, such as the Middle East and South Asia, represent a significant contribution to the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world;

"20. *Affirms* that a nuclear-weapon-free world will ultimately require the underpinnings of a universal and multilaterally negotiated legally binding instrument or a framework encompassing a mutually reinforcing set of instruments;

"21. *Requests* the Secretary-General, within existing resources, to compile a report on the implementation of the present resolution."

2. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 21 of resolution 54/54 G. In connection with paragraph 17 of the resolution, the Secretary-General sought the cooperation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organization for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), the Organization of African Unity regarding the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba) (A/50/426, annex), the South Pacific Forum regarding the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga), the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) and the Government of Thailand in its capacity as depositary of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty), taking into account their respective experiences, in exploring the possible elements for developing verification arrangements as envisaged in resolution 54/54 G. The

views received from the various international organizations and a Government are reflected as received, in section III below. Any additional contributions will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Observations by the Secretary-General

3. The Secretary-General notes that despite the achievements in bilateral and unilateral nuclear weapons reduction, the international community remains deeply concerned at the continued risk for humanity represented by the possibility that these nuclear weapons could be used. In this context, he recalls his report to the Millennium Assembly of the United Nations, entitled "We the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century", in which he stressed the need for reaffirmation of political commitment at the highest levels to reducing the dangers arising both from existing nuclear weapons and from further proliferation (A/54/2000, para. 252).

4. The Secretary-General notes with satisfaction the successful outcome of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. He believes that the adoption of the Final Document by consensus at the Review Conference marks a significant step forward in humanity's pursuit of a world free of nuclear danger. He notes that the consensus agreement by the Conference extends to new efforts aimed at the total elimination of nuclear weapons and non-proliferation and the strengthening of essential standards governing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

5. The Secretary-General welcomes the practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons which were approved by the 2000 Review Conference and strongly hopes for their earliest implementation at all levels. The steps agreed upon are as follows:[1]

> "1. The importance and urgency of signatures and ratifications, without delay and without conditions and in accordance with constitutional processes, to achieve the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.
>
> "2. A moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions or any other nuclear explosions pending entry into force of that Treaty.
>
> "3. The necessity of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in accordance with the statement of the Special Coordinator in 1995 and the mandate contained therein, taking into consideration both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives. The Conference on Disarmament is urged to agree on a programme of work which includes the immediate commencement of negotiations on such a treaty with a view to their conclusion within five years.
>
> "4. The necessity of establishing in the Conference on Disarmament an appropriate subsidiary body with a mandate to deal with nuclear disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament is urged to agree on a programme of work which includes the immediate establishment of such a body.
>
> "5. The principle of irreversibility to apply to nuclear disarmament, nuclear and other related arms control and reduction measures.
>
> "6. An unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, to which all States parties are committed under article VI.
>
> "7. The early entry into force and full implementation of START II and the conclusion of START III as soon as possible while preserving and strengthening the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems as a cornerstone of strategic stability and as a basis for further reductions of strategic offensive weapons, in accordance with its provisions.
>
> "8. The completion and implementation of the Trilateral Initiative between the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency.
>
> "9. Steps by all the nuclear-weapon States leading to nuclear disarmament in a way that

promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all:

- Further efforts by the nuclear-weapon States to reduce their nuclear arsenals unilaterally;
- Increased transparency by the nuclear-weapon States with regard to the nuclear weapons capabilities and the implementation of agreements pursuant to article VI and as a voluntary confidence-building measure to support further progress on nuclear disarmament;
- The further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives and as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process;
- Concrete agreed measures to further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems;
- A diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies to minimize the risk that these weapons will ever be used and to facilitate the process of their total elimination;
- The engagement as soon as appropriate of all the nuclear-weapon States in the process leading to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons.

"10. Arrangements by all nuclear-weapon States to place, as soon as practicable, fissile material designated by each of them as no longer required for military purposes under IAEA or other relevant international verification and arrangements for the disposition of such material for peaceful purposes, to ensure that such material remains permanently outside military programmes.

"11. Reaffirmation that the ultimate objective of the efforts of States in the disarmament process is general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

"12. Regular reports, within the framework of the strengthened review process for the Non-Proliferation Treaty, by all States parties on the implementation of article VI and paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 decision on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament", and recalling the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996.

"13. The further development of the verification capabilities that will be required to provide assurance of compliance with nuclear disarmament agreements for the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear-weapon-free world."

6. The Secretary-General also notes the deliberations and the proposals put forward on paragraphs 12, 13 and 18 of resolution 54/54 G by delegations in the Conference on Disarmament.

III. Observations by international organizations and Governments

A. International Atomic Energy Agency

7. In its comments, IAEA stated as follows:

"The resolution reiterates and reinforces the views expressed by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session in its resolution 53/77 Y of 4 December 1998. It recognizes that the achievement of a world free from nuclear weapons will require a concurrent, dual-track approach in order to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons and to eliminate existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons. To attain the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world, the resolution focuses on a comprehensive, all-inclusive programme designed to encompass all pertinent elements of nuclear disarmament and of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, including existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms and arrangements.

"At the same time, it recognizes the validity of a step-by-step approach to the pursuit of a nuclear-weapon-free world. It will be recalled that such an approach, involving both nuclear non-proliferation and arms control and disarmament efforts, was endorsed by the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It is reflected, inter alia, in the practical steps envisaged in paragraph 15 of the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference[2] as relevant to the implementation of article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Paragraph 15 of the Final Document will be crucial to the achievement of the aims of resolution 54/54 G.

"The resolution, like its predecessor, affirms that the development of verification arrangements will be necessary for the maintenance of a world free from nuclear weapons. In such a world, it is clear that States will require a particularly high level of assurance that the pertinent verification arrangements which need to be in place will promptly detect any cheating on the part of other States. Effective verification will accordingly be a sine qua non of the various legal obligations and undertakings which resolution 54/54 G highlights as essential to a nuclear-weapon-free world. In this regard, we consider that the long experience of IAEA in implementing safeguards, a fundamental pillar of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, will be of pivotal importance.

"The significance of IAEA safeguards to nuclear non-proliferation, and to an environment conducive to nuclear disarmament and to nuclear cooperation, is widely recognized. With a safeguards system which has now been strengthened considerably in the wake of our experience in Iraq, IAEA is in a position to provide enhanced assurance that States are abiding by their nuclear non-proliferation commitments, thereby further fostering confidence between States and thus enhancing international security. The strengthened safeguards system sets new standards of transparency and openness and provides the Agency with powerful new tools to verify compliance with nuclear non-proliferation commitments. Key to our ability to be able to use these tools to maximum effect is that *all* States accept comprehensive safeguards, and that they subscribe also to the enhanced verification measures contained in the Model Protocol Additional to safeguards agreements.[3] Paragraph 8 of resolution 54/54 G acknowledges this. Universal adherence to 'comprehensive' safeguards agreements modelled on INFCIRC/153 (Corr.) and protocols additional to such agreements would enable the Agency to make a major contribution to global verification of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

"It should be recalled that IAEA is currently taking an active part in other contexts which could be relevant for the eventual verification of a nuclear-weapon-free world. Paragraphs 5 (e) and 11 of resolution 54/54 G refer, for example, to initiatives with some of the nuclear-weapon States to verify that nuclear material declared as excess to their military requirements remains irreversibly removed from nuclear weapons programmes. In 1996, the Agency began work with the Russian Federation and the United States to establish a prototype verification system for weapon-origin and other fissile material specified by those States as released from military programmes. The amounts of material to be verified could ultimately total hundreds of tonnes of highly enriched uranium and plutonium. Such a system must provide assurance that the material remains removed from nuclear weapons programmes.

"Paragraph 12 of the resolution refers to the preliminary discussions under way in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva on the issue of a treaty prohibiting the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The verification arrangements for such a treaty have yet to be determined, but the Agency is on record as being ready to provide any assistance deemed necessary by the Conference on Disarmament, as consistent with the mandate of the Agency and with the pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly, which requested the Agency 'to provide assistance for examination of verification arrangements for such a treaty as required'.[4] The verification regime of a fissile material cut-off treaty will probably focus, in particular, on nuclear material and facilities in nuclear-weapon States and States non-parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty not currently subject to IAEA safeguards. This will present new verification challenges, particularly in facilities where independent, outside inspection was never anticipated.

"The Agency also continues to provide assistance and guidance to the executive bodies of and States parties to the various nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties in existence or under negotiation.

"It plays a crucial role, as well, in efforts to strengthen the international physical protection regime for nuclear material and facilities referred

to in paragraph 10 of resolution 54/54 G. Increasing awareness of the need to protect nuclear material and other radioactive sources from unlawful activities has led the international community to consider strengthening the physical protection regime. The Agency has reinforced its ongoing work in this regard to assist States in their efforts to prevent the unauthorized removal and sabotage of nuclear material and facilities and to detect and respond to incidents of trafficking. In addition, with a view to strengthening and making the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material more effective, the Director-General is currently seeking the advice of States parties to the Convention on whether there is a need for its revision.

"At the same time, as pointed out in my comments on aspects of General Assembly resolution 53/77 Y of 4 December 1998 on the same subject (see A/54/372, para. 9), many of the issues associated with the elimination of nuclear weapons go far beyond the realm of verification and will require political, economic and security accommodations.

"Thus, while IAEA will continue to be ready to undertake verification tasks consistent with its mandate, as requested, which would contribute to a nuclear-weapon-free world, it is essentially for States themselves to undertake and accomplish most of the necessary groundwork in this regard."

B. South Pacific Forum

8. The reply from the South Pacific Forum Secretariat, in its capacity as depositary of the Treaty of Rarotonga, reads as follows:

"As we advised last year in similar correspondence relating to paragraph 16 of resolution 53/77 Y (ibid., para. 12), articles 8, 9 and 10 of the Rarotonga Treaty provide for the verification arrangements of the Treaty which consist of reports and exchange of information, consultations, the application to peaceful nuclear activities of safeguards by IAEA and a complaints procedure.

"The procedures under the verification arrangements of the Treaty have not been invoked by any party to the Treaty or Protocols to the Treaty thus far. France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America have conducted nuclear tests in the region, but that was prior to the Treaty coming into effect or France becoming a party to the Protocols to the Treaty.

"The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization is also in the process of negotiating the establishment of monitoring sites in our region with several of our members as part of the International Monitoring System provided for under that Treaty. At their most recent meeting in Palau, in October 1999, Forum Leaders encouraged Forum members who had been chosen to host monitoring stations under the International Monitoring System of the global verification regime provided for under the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to expedite the completion of national arrangements required for setting up the stations as soon as practicable.

"With our limited experience, our view would be that a global verification regime should consist of both technical verification systems and consultative mechanisms. The latter is particularly relevant in our region."

C. Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

9. The Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for CTBTO submitted the following reply:

"The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization was established by the States signatories to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty on 19 November 1996 for the purpose of carrying out the necessary preparations for the effective implementation of the Treaty.

"To date, 155 States have signed the Treaty and 57 States have ratified it. Of the 44 States whose ratification is necessary for the Treaty to enter into force, 28 have deposited their instruments of ratification, while 3 have yet to sign the Treaty. In a major call by the international community to advance entry into force, the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (Vienna, 6-8 October 1999), which was held in accordance with article XIV of the Treaty, adopted a Final Declaration by consensus. The Declaration, inter alia, called upon States to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible and to refrain from acts that would defeat its object and purpose in the meanwhile. This call was taken up in the Final Document adopted by consensus on 19 May 2000 at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

"Pursuant to legal arrangements that, as at the end of June 2000, the Commission had concluded with 64 States covering 274 monitoring facilities, work to establish or upgrade the 337 facilities of the International Monitoring System is well under way. Rigorous site surveys are being conducted to assess the suitability of prospective station locations and the equipment or construction work needed so that stations may meet the stringent requirements of the verification regime of the Treaty. Certification has been initiated for a number of stations of the network. Training is conducted for prospective station managers and operators.

"The International Data Centre is being progressively commissioned in Vienna as the nerve centre of the verification system for the Treaty. Over 100 monitoring stations are now contributing data to the Centre. Concurrently, a secure satellite-based global communications infrastructure is being progressively installed. In February 2000, the Centre began providing initial services and distributing raw data from the International Monitoring System and standard products of the Centre to States signatories. The Centre conducts training programmes for its prospective analysts and for staff of national data centres.

"While on-site inspections can only be mandated after the Treaty enters into force, the Preparatory Commission is developing and putting in place the framework for inspections according to Treaty requirements. This involves, first and foremost, compiling a first draft of the operational manual, as well as a concept of operations, designating and procuring some inspection equipment, and conducting on-site inspection training and exercise programmes to form a cadre of potential inspectors.

"Quality assurance work, to ensure that the verification regime meets the high expectations of the international community, is proceeding through the design and implementation of a framework that includes the definition of metrics and tools for evaluation.

"The Commission has also instituted an international cooperation programme to enhance understanding of the significance of the Treaty regime and the potential thereunder for other peaceful purposes.

"With the entry into force on 15 June 2000 of the Agreement to Regulate the Relationship between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission,[5] the Commission and the United Nations will be in a position to cooperate closely on matters of common concern, thus facilitating the implementation of their respective mandates. Discussions on a related agreement with the United Nations Development Programme are under way."

D. Government of Thailand

10. The Government of Thailand, as depositary of the Bangkok Treaty, reported that it has no additional views other than those enunciated in its earlier comments regarding resolution 53/77 Y (see A/54/372, para. 11).

Notes

[1] NPT/CONF.2000/28 (Parts I and II), pp. 14-15.

[2] Ibid.

[3] INFCIRC/540 (Corr.).

[4] General Assembly resolution 48/75 L, para. 2.

[5] A/54/884, annex.